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THAT ALARM CLOCK.

It was always the hardest thing in the world for me to do to wake up early. Eight consecutive mornings did I try to get up at 5 o'clock in order to reach a certain train that should take me to Philadelphia, where business awaited my presence. The earlier I went to bed the later I slept, and I began to feel demoralized myself. At all events, I felt ashamed of myself.

I consulted with and opened my heart to a friend of the name of Snapper. He is a sympathizing cuss, especially where it costs him nothing. Snapper suggested that I buy an alarm clock to assist my lack of natural yeast.

I took Snapper's advice and bought one. The man who sold it gave me lessons in operating it without extra charge. I could see through it like a hole in a board fence. All you had to do was simply to wind a little wheel-a-mag-gig around until a certain figure pointed to the hour on the dial, the one which you wished to be bounced out at, and everything was serene.

I bought that clock in the evening, unbeknown to my family, and, thinking I had a sweet, sure thing on being awakened at the proper hour, I lingered with some friends in front of a julep reservoir. So it was past 10 when I got home, and everybody was asleep.

My angelic mother-in-law had escaped the perils of smallpox, cholera, etc., and had arrived that day to stay with us "for a few days." Heaven, what a number of days it takes to constitute a "few" with that mother-in-law!

Well, her long journey had tired her out, and she, too, had gone to bed. Entering softly, I deposited my clock on the table that stood at the head of my bed. Then I "set her," after which I carefully placed myself horizontally in my little bed, making no disturbance, for I dislike lectures, and was soon lost to everything in the shape of fear or anxiety.

What a blessed thing sleep is, especially when you are not afraid and know you are all right about getting up! It will be observed that I pause to moralize.

Well, I had really got sleep on the brain. I was tintured with it clear through. But there is not the slightest use of moralizing or describing any further, and I will come to the point at once.

In the dead watch and middle of the night I was rudely awakened by a fierce and agonizing yell from the partner of my bed. Not only that, but I had the breath nearly knocked out of my body by the said partner throwing herself upon me in her frantic endeavors to get out of that bed. I felt something was loose.

As soon as my senses were revived I heard the fearfullest rattle-to-bang-ding-to-dong-sputter-to-elick-whizz-etc.-pop mingled with the wild shouts and groans of my wife. I was entirely confounded myself. She yelled "Murder! Thieves! Police!" and, with tottering steps, she made for the adjoining bedroom, where her mother was. I followed in terror myself, for as yet I had not sufficiently come to my senses to know what the deuce it was all about anyhow.

That mother-in-law leaped from her dreams, from her bed, and, seeing me tremblingly trying to quiet her daughter, she at once concluded that I was trying to murder her and came for me tooth and nail. Then I shouted; then we all shouted, and the uproar was heard in the street, and murder was thought to be doing.

Still that awful racket was kept up in my bedroom. The truth flashed over my mind. I had made a mistake in setting my alarm clock, and it had "gone off." I rushed wildly for it. I placed it between the feather bed and the mattress, but still it kept on with its devilish racket. The women also kept up theirs. I seized that clock and rushed to the bathroom, and there let a flood of water upon it in the hope of silencing it, but all to no purpose. While this confusion was going on within the police had rapped for assistance and had gained admittance to the house. They rushed up to our sleeping apartments and burst in the door.

"What's up? What's the row? Where is he?" said one of them.

My mother-in-law pointed them to the bathroom, where I was trying to drown that confounded clock in a tub of water.

The officers drew their clubs and pistols and charged upon me. I mounted the tub and pointed to that clock, which was still dinging away like something possessed of the devil.

"What is the meaning of all this row?" I attempted to explain, but the voice of my mother-in-law was heard above all words of mine.

"Take him away, officers. He has been trying to murder us both. Take him away!"

In the meantime my wife had swooned. One of the officers went for that clock with his club. He smashed it across the snook. He welched it in the face. He dislocated its lower jaw. He crippled its hands. He knocked it out of time, but still it rattled away, and it was not until he had driven his No. 12 boot in among its liver and things that it finally caved in and concluded to stop.

Silence being partially restored, I explained to the officers how the whole rumpus was occasioned, and, so far as they were concerned, they were inclined to laugh at the whole affair and leave us alone, but my frightened mother-in-law protested that I had an undoubted attack of the jinnjams, as I had been drinking, she said, and nothing short of my going to the station house would satisfy her. Sweet angel of my household!

I dressed and went with them. I took the remains of that alarm clock with me, and after explaining to the captain all about it all hands joined in a hearty laugh and passed the remainder of the night quite pleasantly with a pack of cards and a bottle of wine, but no more alarm clocks for me—not any.—New York News.

Wet and Dry.

Why does a wet surface feel colder than a dry one? This is chiefly due to the phenomenon of evaporation. The majority of liquids, when left to themselves in contact with the atmosphere, gradually pass into a state of vapor and disappear.

The passage from the liquid into the gaseous state is accompanied by a great loss of heat, which is rendered latent by the process of vaporization. Beyond this, when a substance is wet, its conducting power is increased, and more heat is conveyed from the hand to the surface.

This is easily explained. The hand does not form a very perfect contact with a dry surface, leaving a certain small amount of air space between, and air is a very bad conductor of heat. When the surface is wet, however, the contact is more exact, and the water forms a good conducting medium.

A Woman's Reason.

"She sent my letter back unopened."
"Why?"
"She said the postman who delivered it kicked her dog."—Chicago Record.

A WOMAN HATER.

Colonel Langdale, on being appointed commandant of the Seventy-first native infantry, resolved to weed out all the married officers serving with that corps. To this end he made the lives of the benedicts extremely irksome, so that they all applied to be transferred to other regiments.

In due course the Seventy-first native infantry was ordered to Haizapore, the principal military station of the presidency, where upon Colonel Langdale took a year's furlough to England. It was generally understood that the colonel would apply for an extension of leave and would remain in England until the regiment's term of service at Haizapore should have expired, but he had not been home more than nine months when he wrote to Major Tarver informing him that he was about to be married and that after a short honeymoon on the continent he should bring his bride out to India with him. "You will think me inconsistent," he explained, "but circumstances alter cases, and when you know Gwendoline you will, I am sure, admit that I have acted wisely," and so on to the end of four closely written pages.

"Bah! There's no fool like an old fool!" exclaimed Tarver, tearing the letter to pieces. "Well, it's no affair of mine. He must just dree his own weird."

The terrible Indian plague had found its way to Haizapore at last. All efforts to arrest its progress had proved inefficacious. In the native city and surrounding villages men, women and children were dying like flies. The roll of victims was daily on the increase. Custom makes us familiar with and indifferent to danger, and the pestilence had come to be regarded as a matter of course—an unpleasant but necessary means of reducing the surplus population. The natives alone fell victims to it. The white men seemed, by a merciful dispensation of Providence, to be exempted from contagion. There was consequently no cessation of the usual round of gayeties at Haizapore. The cantonment roads were thronged daily with funeral processions on their way to the burning grounds, but the bands at the gymkhana and the public gardens played none the less cheerily, though the wail of Hindoo mourners rang loud in the air.

In the native city, where infection passed rapidly from house to house, whole streets were being depopulated by the pestilence. Many of the inhabitants had fled, carrying death and destruction far and wide into the country. Others, strong in their fatalistic creed, clung to their homes and refused to budge, comforting themselves with the philosophical reflection that a man can die but once and that there is no escaping the hand of fate. It became clear to the authorities that unless strong repressive measures were adopted every house in the city would become impregnated with the germs of disease and form a death trap for all future inmates.

The troops in garrison were detailed in turn for "plague duty," their work consisting in examining every house and removing to the segregation hospital any inmate found suffering from the prevailing malady. When the turn of the Seventy-first native infantry came, Major Tarver was ordered to superintend the unpleasant work of examining suspected sufferers and removing from the houses and burning the clothes and effects of plague patients.

Tarver worked heroically at his ungenial task, encouraging his men by his example. He was quite reckless of his life and would fearlessly enter houses known to be infected and carry poor plague stricken wretches out in his own arms. One morning while riding to the city he was seized with a sudden faintness, but, throwing it off by sheer force of will, he applied himself to his work with his usual indefatigable zeal. On returning home in the evening he had no sooner entered his bungalow than his head began to swim, his limbs to tremble, a deadly feeling of nausea crept over him, an indescribable numbing sensation pervaded his whole frame, stupefying and maddening him.

"A whisky and soda, quick!" he shouted to his servant, at the same time throwing himself down on his bed.

The man, returning, saw his master writhing in agony, swinging his arms wildly about, the light of madness in his eyes, his lips bubbling with green foam. He dropped the tray in abject fright, gasped, "Mahamari!" and ran to summon the regimental surgeon.

Dr. Mason, stripping off Tarver's shirt, discovered a blue, livid lump under his left arm. There could be no doubt about it. It was the sign of the plague.

"It's bad business, I fear," said the doctor to Wilkinson of the Seventy-first, whom he met outside the house. "I fear there is little chance of his recovery."

The next morning Colonel Langdale, stopping on his way back from parade at Tarver's bungalow to inquire after the patient, was surprised to see his wife's pony trap standing at the door. A greater surprise was in store for him, for on silently entering the sickroom he saw his wife kneeling by her husband's bed, her hands clasped on the forehead of the sick man, and heard her say in heartrending tones as she covered it with kisses:

"Speak to me, Hubert, my darling—just one word. Tell me that you have forgiven me. You shall not die, dearest. They shall not take you from me again. Oh, Hubert, if you only knew how much I love you! My marriage has been a mockery and a farce. I only married for the sake of a home. Had it been you, dear, how happy my life would have been! Oh, why did I not tell you I was free? Speak, Hubert! It is you only I love. For your dear sake I would—"

But the cold lips of the dying man gave back no answer to her passionate appeal. Her look of love found no responsive glance from the swiftly glazing eye. The death rattle was sounding in the dying man's throat, when with an access of passion almost savage in its intensity, Gwendoline Langdale threw her arms round her lover's neck and strained him fiercely to her bosom in a last long, lingering embrace.

"Let me die with you," she murmured, pressing her lips to his. "I am weary of my life."

The unwilling spectator of the scene had stood motionless, tongue tied and fascinated. He turned on his heel and silently left the room.

"She told me she loved me," he muttered, "and I was fool enough to believe her. I am rightly served for my credulity. The Brahman was a true prophet."—Ladgate.

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